

# INDEX

- A.W.E., *article by*, 200 ; *contribution by*, 304  
 Acton Street, *see* Casby, Mr.  
 Adams, Mabel Ellery, *article by*, 177  
 Advertising, Dickens in, 87, 128, 227, 276, 278, 281, 283, 285, 295  
 Aunt, Mr. F's, 239  
 Baldwin, Rt. Hon. Stanley, M.P., elected a Vice-President of the Fellowship, 308 ; principal speaker at the Dickens Birthday Dinner, 81, 85 ; speech at the Dinner, 171  
 Banks, W. H., death of, 66  
*Barnaby Rudge*, *see* Chigwell ; *also* Grip  
 Barnet, the Red Lion Inn demolished, 253  
 Bath, Fellowship Conference at, 81, 249, 255, 261, 304  
   — Mayor of, speaks at Fellowship Conference Dinner, 311  
   — Mr. Pickwick's, 169, 170, 176, 181, 212, 236  
   — *Pickwick* scenes at, 254, 310  
   — The *Pickwicks* of, 105  
   — The *Pickwick* Road to, 25, 249  
   — Where Little Nell was born, 202  
 Bean, Alderman W. G., death of, 74  
 Beckhampton, *see* *Pickwick* Road to Bath, 25  
 Bennett, Arnold, his opinion of Dickens, 4  
*Bentley's Miscellany* : The "Extraordinary Gazette," 54  
 Berger, Francesco, receives a Civil List Pension, 316  
 Bigbury, *Pickwick* Hotel at, 8  
 Birds in Dickens's books, 277  
*Bleak House*, A Study of, 29  
   — Cameos, 125, 127, 131, 133, 135, 139, 177, 197  
   — London places in, 300  
   — Original of Chesney Wold, 45  
   — Presentation copy of, to Charles Knight, sold by auction, 6  
   — Presentation copy of, to Henry Morley, sold by auction, 253  
   — Poor Jo's Graveyard, 84  
   — Random Notes on, 182  
   — The Nameless Inn of, 39  
   — Topography of, 207  
   — *see also* Bounderby on Trial, 50 ; *also* Bucket, Inspector ; *also* Carstone, Richard ; *also* Cook's Court ; *also* Lincolnshire ; *also* Skimpole, Harold.  
 Bleak House, The Original of, 120  
 Blunden, H., *book by*, noticed, 251  
 Bompas, Judge, 83  
 Boston Bibliophile Society, 198  
 Bounderby on Trial, 50  
 Boyle, Mary, *quoted*, 140  
 Brearley, E., *letter from*, 71  
 Bridges, Lowther, *quoted*, 221  
 Bristol, Lord Mayor of, speaks at Fellowship Conference Dinner, 312  
 Brooks, Francis A., *letter from*, 240  
 Brooks of Sheffield, the truth about, 44  
 Browne, Hablôt K., Letters of Dickens to, sold by auction, 6 ; *see also* Phiz.  
 Bucket, Inspector, Original of, 167  
 Budapest, Dramatic version of *David Copperfield* produced in, 253  
 Burdett-Coutts, The Baroness, *see* Coutts, Miss  
 Burns and Dickens : The Men and their Mission, 213  
 Buzfuz, Serjeant, *see* Bompas, Judge, "Bystander, The," *quoted*, 252  
 C.L.H., *contribution by*, 296  
 Capital Punishment, Dickens's views on, 12  
 Carstone, Richard, 183  
 Casby, Mr., The House of, 5  
 Cattermole, George, Letter of Dickens to sold by auction, 316  
 Celindo, Tea, Dickensian advertisements of, 276, 278, 281, 283, 285, 295  
 Chapman and Hall, Messrs., History of, 249  
   — Mr. Arthur Waugh retires from Managing Directorship, 83  
 Cheerfulness, Laughter and, The Philosophy of, 221  
 Cheeryble Brothers, The, 142, 226  
 Chesney Wold, 45  
 Chigwell, A Story of Dickens at, 122  
*Chimes*, The, 239  
*Christmas Carol*, A, History of the MS. of, 141 ; *see also* Spirits, The Three  
 Chivery's House, 167  
 Clark, Wm. A., *letter from*, 151  
 Clenham Street, 83  
 Clennam, Mrs., Site of her house, 238  
 Clevedon, Dickens's popularity at, 38

- Cloisterham, 17, 21, 96, 100 ; *see also* Rochester
- Comic Songs that Dickens knew, 189, 289 ; *see also* 323
- Cook's Court, 83, 207
- Cooper, T. P., 83
- "Cornhill Magazine, The," 188
- Cotterell, T. Sturge, J.P., M.B.E., *article by*, 105 ; speaks at Fellowship Conference Dinner, 312
- Country Life Cigarettes and Tobacco, Dickensian advertisements of, 87, 230
- Coutts, Miss, and the Home for Fallen Women, 198
- Dickens's Letters to, 188
- Criticisms, Contemporary, of Dickens, 235
- Cross, A. E. Brookes, *article by*, 123
- Dadd, S. T., Dickensian advertisement drawings by, 128
- "Daily Mail, The," A Dickens error in, 4
- "Daily News, The," *quoted*, 251 ; *see also* Capital Punishment
- "Daily Telegraph, The," *quoted*, 8
- Dane, Clemence, *quoted*, 252
- Datchery's Disguise dissipated, 97
- David Copperfield, Dramatic version of, produced in Budapest, 253
- Library, The, 324
- *see also* Brooks of Sheffield ; *also* Martha
- Day, W. C., *article by*, 120
- Dean, F. R., *article by*, 143
- Debussy, Claude, *Pickwick* music by, 323
- Defects, Virtues and, 129
- Desmond, Shaw, lecture by, 230
- Devonshire, Miss M. G., *book by*, *noticed*, 7
- Dexter, Walter, *articles by*, 25, 300 ; re-elected Hon. Editor of *The Dickensian*, 308
- Diary of Fellowship Meetings, 79, 162, 330
- Dickens, Charles, A new story of, 122
- Alleged secret deal in letters of, 252
- and C. A. Fechter, 138, 239
- and Ellen Ternan, 37
- and Religion, 200
- Boyhood of, in London, 61, 286
- Burns and : The Men and their Mission, 213
- Contemporary criticisms of, 235
- Extracts from Obituary Notices of, 275
- Dickens, Charles, His appeal to Fallen Women, 198
- His House at Twickenham, 110
- His Insurance Proposal Form, 5
- His Last London Home, 82
- His Letters to Miss Coutts, 188
- His writing table bequeathed to the Fellowship, 3
- Letters of, sold by auction, 316
- Lovers of, 297
- Peeps at, 47, 140, 219, 270
- Record price for a letter of, 240
- The Man, 117
- Virtues and Defects of, 129
- Sir Henry F., K.C., *letter from*, 37 ; speaks at Fellowship Dickens Birthday celebrations, 86
- House, The, 8 ; bequest to, by Lord Rosebery, 3 ; donation to by Sir Charles Wakefield, Bart. 3
- in books, 67
- Mamie, *quoted*, 219
- The Call of, 56
- Dickensian*, The, Walter Dexter re-elected Hon. Editor of, 308
- Tributes to, 23
- Dickensian*, The American, 95
- Dickensiana of the Quarter, 78, 161, 240, 332
- Dingley Dell, 72
- Dobbie, Sir Joseph, *article by*, 213
- Dolby, George, *quoted*, 48
- Dombey and Son*, 239 ; proof page of, sold by auction, 316
- Dorrit Street, 83
- Doughty Street, No. 48, *see* Dickens House, The
- "Edinburgh Review, The," ceases publication, 5
- Education, Dickens's influence on, 177
- Edwards, A. W., re-elected Hon. Secretary of the Fellowship, 308
- Edwin Drood*, The Mystery of, 284
- Cover design, 71
- Datchery's disguise dissipated, 97
- Exhibition of books relating to, 253
- Largely written at 5 Hyde Park Place, 82
- *see* Cloisterham ; *also* "Frood, Angelina, The Mystery of," 70 ; *also* Rochester ; *also* Sapsea, Mr.
- Ellis, B. W., *letter from*, 322

- Ellis, S. M., *letter from* 321 ; *see also* 252
- English Humour, Dickens's place in, 36
- "Evening Standard, The," *quoted*, 168
- Fechter, Charles A., Dickens and, 138, 239
- Fellowship, The Dickens, Annual Conference at Bath, 81, 249, 255, 261, 304 ; Reflections at the Conference, 261 ; Report of Conference Dinner, 311 ; Horace Annesley Vachell's speech at Conference Dinner, 255
- Annual Conference, Origin of, 261
- Annual Balance Sheet, 318-319
- Annual Report of Council, 317
- Baldwin, Rt. Hon. Stanley M.P., elected a Vice-President, 308
- Celebrations of Dickens's birthday anniversary, 81, 85, 171 ; Rt. Hon. Stanley Baldwin's speech at, 171.
- Conference of North American Branches, 82, 313
- Chester, Pa., Branch celebrates its 25th birthday, 169
- Diary of Meetings, 79, 162, 330
- Hewart, Rt. Hon. Lord, elected a Vice-President, 308
- In the Pacific, 201
- Mentioned in a novel, 8
- New Branch at Cinderford, 66
- New Branch at Hawaii, 201
- New York Branch celebrates its 25th birthday, 169, 326 ; celebrates Dickens's birthday anniversary, 265
- Reports of Meetings, 72, 153, 241, 325
- Robbins, Sir Alfred, elected President, 67
- Toronto Branch celebrates its 25th birthday, 168, 296
- Wakefield, Sir Charles, Bart., retires from Presidency, 3
- Field, Inspector, *not* the original of Inspector Bucket, 167
- The Stories of, 285
- Fields, J. T., *quoted*, 141
- Fisher, W. J., re-elected Hon. Treasurer of the Fellowship, 308
- Fordwick, A "Dickens Fayre" at, 43
- Fox's Glacier Mints, Dickensian advertisements of, 228
- France, Dickens's popularity in, 7
- Freeman, Dr. Austin, *see* "Frood, Angelina, The Mystery of"
- Freemasonry and Dickens, 67
- "Frood, Angelina, The Mystery of," 70
- Gadd, W. Laurence, 5 ; *article by*, 207 ; *book by*, reviewed, 53 ; *letter from*, 151
- Gale, James Scarth, *article by*, 202
- George Inn, Grantham, The, 39
- George Silverman's *Explanation*, 285
- Grant, William and Daniel, *see* Cheeryble Brothers, The
- Grantham, The George Inn, *see* *Bleak House*, The Nameless Inn of, 39
- Great Expectations*, 239
- Copy of first edition of, sold by auction, 6
- Country, The, 53, 151
- Grip, 323 ; *see also* Birds in Dickens's books
- Hagberg, Dr. Knut, *book by*, 168, 250
- Haldane, Howard, *quoted*, 141
- "Hampstead," *article by*, 54
- "Handley Cross," Possible influence of on *Pickwick*, 165, 321
- Hard Times*, 284 ; *see also* Bounderby
- Hare and Hounds Hotel, Bigbury, Name of, changed to the "Pickwick Hotel," 8
- Harris, Edwin, *guide books by*, noticed, 95
- Harris, Mrs., A real, called as a witness in the Divorce Court, 44
- Harris, Mrs. M. E., speaks at Fellowship Conference Dinner, 312
- Hawaii, Fellowship branch formed at, 201
- Hearn, A. S., *letter from*, 321
- Hewart, Rt. Hon. Lord, elected a Vice-President of the Fellowship, 308
- Hoefnagels, N., *letter from*, 69
- Holmes, Edgar S., *letter from*, 238
- Hopkins, A. A., 95
- Horsemonger Lane, *see* Chivery's horse
- Houses, Descriptions of, in Dickens's books, 24
- Hullah, John P., Letters of Dickens to, sold by auction, 316
- Humour, English, Dickens's place in, 36
- Hunt, Leigh, and Harold Skimpole, 251
- Hyde Park Place, No. 5, 82

- J.W.T.L., *article by*, 38  
 Jameson, The Hon. Charles, *article by*, 129  
 Jeffrey, Lord, his attachment for Dickens, 5  
 Jo's, Poor, Graveyard, 84  
 Johnson Street, No. 13, 324  
 "Jorrock's Jaunts," Possible influence of on *Pickwick*, 165, 252, 321  
 K.C., *article by*, 50  
 Kent, W., *book by, reviewed*, 200  
 Knight, Charles, Presentation copy of *Bleak House* to, sold by auction, 6  
 Lancashire Stories, Dickens's, 284  
 Langley, Doris, *letter from*, 323  
 Laughter and Cheerfulness, The Philosophy of, 221  
 Laughter and the Soul, 265  
 Lawler, Miss Gertrude, *death of*, 36  
 Leech, John, 4  
 Letters to the Editor, 69, 150, 237, 321  
 Ley, J. W. T., *articles by*, 37, 111, 117, 189, 198, 261, 289  
 — *letter from*, 239  
 — *letter to, from* Leo Tolstoy, 166  
 — speaks at Fellowship Conference Dinner, 312  
 Lincolnshire, The Place that was not in, 45  
 Little Dorrit, Church of St. George, Southwark, 83  
 — Phiz and, 152  
 — *see also* Aunt, Mr. F's; also Casby, Mr.; also Dorrit Street; also Clenham Street; also Clennam, Mrs.; also Chivery's House  
 London, Boyhood of Dickens in, 61  
 — Places in *Bleak House*, 300  
 — The, that Dickens knew, 58  
 Lucas, James, the original of Mr. Mopes, 123  
 Lynd, Robert, *quoted*, 251  
 M.H., *contribution by*, 137  
 M.P., *contribution by*, 43  
 Macey, Mary A., *article by*, 277  
 Manchester, *see* Cheeryble Brothers, The  
 Mansfield, Katherine, and Dickens, 15  
 March-in-the-East, Ye Olde Griffin Hotel at, 8  
 Marlborough Downs, *see* *Pickwick*  
 Road to Bath, The  
 Martha, The suggestion for, 198  
 Martin, five characters of the name in *Pickwick*, 322  
 Martin Chuzzlewit, A Riddle in, 69  
 — *see* Harris, Mrs.  
 McNulty, J., *article by*, 225; *letter from*, 151; *poem by*, 1  
 Men, The Two Races of, 297  
 Meredith, George, a parallel between him and Dickens, 150  
 "Merry Wives of Windsor, The," Draft programme of, in Dickens's handwriting, sold by auction, 316  
 Miles, William, 149  
 Miller, W., *article by*, 84  
 Minards, Doris, *letter from*, 322  
 Miscellaneous Papers, *see* Capital Punishment  
 Missing Word Competition, A Dickens, 324  
 Mopes, Mr., The Truth about, 123  
 Moreland, Arthur, 83; Dickensian advertisement drawings by, 87, 230  
 Morley, Henry, Presentation copy of *Bleak House* to, sold by auction, 253  
 Mosley, Christine, *article by*, 56  
 Mottey, Mrs. John L., *quoted*, 271  
 Murderers, The Vanity of, 12  
 Music, *Pickwick* in, 137, 240  
 Napier, Macvey, and the "Edinburgh Review," 5  
 Nell, Little, Birthplace of, 202  
 New York Branch celebrates its 25th birthday, 169, 326  
 Nicholas Nickleby, *see* Cheeryble Brother, The; also Squeers, Mr.  
 Nichols, Dr. T. L., *quoted*, 220  
 Niemann, Walter, composes a suite for the piano, "Pickwick, a cycle after Charles Dickens," 137  
 Norwood, Rev. Dr. Robert, speech by, at New York Dickens's Birthday Celebrations, 265  
 Old Curiosity Shop, The, 239; Presentation copy of, to T. N. Talfourd, sold by auction, 83; *see* Nell, Little; also Quilp Street  
 "Old Curiosity Shop," Portsmouth Street, 252  
 Oliver Twist, *see* Saffron Hill; also Southwark, St. George's Workhouse  
 Osborne, Charles C., editing Dickens's letters to Miss Coutts, 188; *letter from*, 151  
 O'Thello, Sales of portions of MS. of, 9  
 Our Mutual Friend, *see* Wegg, Silas

- Pacific, the, *The Fellowship in*, 201  
 Panzetta, Mrs. G. W., *Death of*, 329  
 Paradox of Dickens, *The*, 225  
 Pegram, Fred, Dickensian advertisement drawings by, 276, 278, 281, 283, 285, 295  
 Pendered, Mary L., *article by*, 183  
 Perrett, Edward, 253  
 Philadelphia, Conference of North American Branches at, 82, 313  
 — Dickens's association with, 89, 313  
 Phiz, and *Little Dorrit*, 152; *see also* Browne, Hablôt K.  
 Pickwick Club, *The City*, 13, 166  
 — *Hotel, The, Bigbury*, 8  
 — Mrs., included in a book of character studies, 168, 250  
*Pickwick Papers, The*, German composer inspired by, 137; *see also* 240, 323  
 — Index of references to, in *The Dickensian*, 204, 273  
 — Place of, in literature, 237, 282  
 — Possible influence of "Jorrock's Jaunts" on, 165, 252, 321  
 — *see Bath*; *also Buzfuz, Serjeant*; *also Dingley Dell*; *also Martin*; *also Pope Joan*; *also Stiggins, Mr.*; *also Wellerisms*, 14  
*Pickwick Poem, A*, 324  
 — *Puzzle, A*, 322  
 — *Road to Bath, The*, 25, 304  
 — *Scenes at Bath*, 254  
*Pickwicks of Bath, The*, 105; *see also* 151  
 Quilp Street, 83  
 Read, Rev. W. Harvey, *letter from*, 322  
 Reed, A. H., *letter from*, 323  
 Reference books, Dickensian, 6  
 Reitz, Deney's, *book by, reviewed*, 67  
 Religion, Dickens and, 200  
 Ribblesdale, Lord, *quoted*, 49  
 Riddell, The Hon. Wm. Renwick, *article by*, 29  
 Ridge, W. Pett, speaks at Fellowship celebrations of Dickens's birthday 87  
 Robbins, Sir Alfred, *article by*, 97  
 — *book by, noticed*, 169  
 — President of the Fellowship, 67  
 — speaks at Fellowship celebrations of Dickens's birthday, 87; at Fellowship Conference Dinner, 311  
 Rochester Cathedral and the *Drood* mystery, 151  
 — *Crown Inn*, 253  
 — Mr. Sapsea's house purchased by the Corporation, 167  
 — *see also Cloisterham*  
 Roe, Frank G., *articles by*, 39, 45  
 — Fred, R.I. *book by, quoted*, 122  
 Ronuk, Dickensian advertisements of, 128  
 Rosebery, Lord, bequest by, to the Dickens House, 3  
 Russell-Davies, Dora M., *letter from*, 322  
 Saffron Hill, 150  
 Sapsea's House, purchased by the Rochester Corporation, 167  
 Saracen's Head, Snow Hill, Site of, marked by a tablet, 253  
 Saxe, Miss Mary, speaks at Fellowship Conference Dinner, 312  
 Sayers, Dorothy L., *letter from*, 70  
*Schoolboy's Story, The*, MS. of, sold by auction, 6  
*School Days of Dickens, The*, 61, 286  
 Shaw, Wm., the original of Squeers, 6  
 Shepherd's Bush, The Home for Fallen Women at, 198  
 Shore, W. Teignmouth, *book by, reviewed*, 251  
 Simpson, Mrs. Jane Ann Heavisides, *quoted*, 47  
*Sketches by Boz*, Presentation copy of, to William Upcott, sold by auction, 316  
 Skimpole, Harold, Leigh Hunt and, 251  
 Songs of Silas Wegg, 111  
 — Comic, that Dickens knew, 189, 289, 323  
 Southwark, Little Dorrit's Church, 83  
 — St. George's Workhouse, 168  
 "Spectator, The," *quoted*, 4  
 Spirits, The Three (poem), 1  
 Squeers, Mr., The original of, 26  
 Stage, the, Dickens on, 253  
 Staplehurst Railway Accident, The, *see Ternan, Ellen*  
 Steel, C. H., *letter from*, 240  
 Stenbridge, George E., death of, 76  
 Stevens, Dean, *book by, reviewed*, 7  
 St. George the Martyr Church, Southwark, 83  
 Stiggins, A., of 1829, 69  
 Stone, Marcus, his opinion of C. A. Fechter, 239  
 — his opinion of Edmund Yates, 239  
 — *quoted*, 270

- Strachan-Cameron, Major H., *letter from*, 323
- Sun Assurance Co., The, Dickens's proposal form, 5
- "Sunday Express, The," *quoted*, 4
- Sunday's Child, 258
- Surtees, R. S., Possible influence of, in *Pickwick*, 165, 252, 321
- Tabard Players, The Dickensian, 327
- Talbot Inn, Welford, *see Bleak House*, The Nameless Inn of, 39
- Talfourd, T. N., Presentation copy to, of *The Old Curiosity Shop* sold by auction, 83
- Tate, Mrs. May G., *letter from*, 324
- Tavistock House, Site of, marked by a tablet, 253
- Ternan, Ellen, *not* Dickens's god-daughter, 37
- *not* in the Staplehurst Railway Accident, 37
- Thompson, J. K., *article by*, 89
- Thompson, P. W., *book by*, *noticed*, 67
- Tolstoy, Leo, his high estimation of Dickens, 166
- Tom Tiddler's Ground*, *see* Mopes, Mr.
- Tooth's, Sydney, Bitter Ale, Dickensian advertisements of, 227
- Topography, Dickensian, 5, 8, 17, 21, 24, 25, 39, 43, 45, 53, 58, 61, 72, 81, 82, 83, 84, 89, 95, 96, 100, 105, 110, 120, 122, 125, 127, 131, 133, 135, 139, 142, 150, 151, 167, 168, 169, 170, 176, 177, 181, 192, 202, 207, 212, 236, 238, 239, 249, 251, 252, 253, 254, 286, 300, 304, 324
- Toronto Branch celebrates its 25th birthday, 168, 296
- Twickenham, Dickens's house at, 110
- Tyler, Miss Florence, a *Pickwick* poem by, 324
- Tyler, President John, and Dickens, 240
- Tyrrell, T. W., 5
- Upcott, William, Presentation copy to, of *Sketches by Boz*, sold by auction, 316
- Vachell, Horace Annesley, speech by, at Fellowship Conference Dinner, 255
- Virtues and Defects, 129
- W.B.K., *contribution by*, 122
- W.P.W., *article by*, 297
- Wagenknecht, Edward, *articles by*, 15, 138; *book by*, *reviewed*, 117
- Wakefield, Sir Charles C., Bart., Donation of, to the Dickens House, 3; retires from the Presidency of the Fellowship, 3
- Walpole, Hugh, *quoted*, 4
- Walters, J. Cuming, *article by*, 282; *see also* 237
- Warren, W. B., *contribution by*, 230; *letter from*, 150; speaks at Fellowship Conference Dinner, 311
- Waugh, Arthur, *book by*, *noticed*, 249; retires from Managing Directorship of Chapman and Hall, 83
- Webbling, Miss Peggy, *book by*, *noticed*, 8
- Wegg, Silas, The Songs of, 111
- Welford, The Talbot Inn, *see Bleak House*, the Nameless Inn of, 39
- Wellerisms, 14, 104
- "Western Mail, The," *quoted*, 198
- When Found—, 3, 81, 165, 249
- Whiffen, Mrs. Thomas, *book by*, *noticed*, 37
- Whitcombe, Charles, *article by*, 12
- White, Felix, Dickens music by, 240
- Whitehorn, Captain A. C., *letter from*, 69
- Whittaker, Ruth, *articles by*, 233, 258
- Who is this? 60, 71
- Who said this? 88, 104
- Wilshire, F. A., speaks at Fellowship Conference Dinner, 311
- Wind in the East, 233
- Winnipeg Branch, Charles W. Youell elected President, 253
- Women, Fallen, Dickens's Appeal to, 198
- Woodfield, Kate, *article by*, 221
- Yates, Edmund, 239
- "Yorkshire Evening Post, The," *quoted*, 6
- You Should Know That—, 68, 232
- Youell, Charles W., elected President of the Winnipeg Branch, 253
- Zweig, Stefan, *book by*, *noticed*, 250

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

|                                                                                                                    |                  |      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------|
| ... ..                                                                                                             | ... Frontispiece |      |
|                                                                                                                    |                  | PAGE |
| Charles Dickens, <i>from a litho. by Sol. Eytinge, Jun.</i> ... ..                                                 | ...              | 2    |
| Facsimiles of a MS. page of <i>O'Thello</i> ... ..                                                                 | 9, 10, 11, 12    | 12   |
| Sam Weller ... ..                                                                                                  | ...              | 14   |
| Mr. Sapsea's House, Cloisterham, <i>photo by Walter Dexter</i> ... ..                                              | ...              | 17   |
| Nuns' House, Cloisterham, <i>photo by Walter Dexter</i> ... ..                                                     | ...              | 21   |
| Pickwick Village, near Bath ... ..                                                                                 | ...              | 25   |
| Moses Pickwick's Coaching Screen ... ..                                                                            | ...              | 26   |
| Pickwick Village, near Bath ... ..                                                                                 | ...              | 27   |
| Coach and Horses Inn, Beckhampton ... ..                                                                           | ...              | 28   |
| Scenes from <i>Bleak House</i> , <i>photo by T. W. Tyrrell</i> ... ..                                              | ...              | 33   |
| The Nameless Inn of <i>Bleak House</i> —A Map, <i>by J. Winbolt</i> ... ..                                         | ...              | 39   |
| Rockingham Castle Gateway ... ..                                                                                   | ...              | 45   |
| Charles Dickens on the lawn at Gads Hill ... ..                                                                    | ...              | 47   |
| Lincoln's Inn ... ..                                                                                               | ...              | 50   |
| W. Laurence Gadd ... ..                                                                                            | ...              | 53   |
| Facsimile of Title Page to the "Extraordinary Gazette" ( <i>Bentley's Miscellany</i> ) ... ..                      | ...              | 55   |
| Map of London in Dickens's time ... ..                                                                             | ...              | 58   |
| Mr. Micawber and David ... ..                                                                                      | ...              | 62   |
| The boy Dickens in the Blacking Warehouse ... ..                                                                   | ...              | 63   |
| Early Morning in the Streets, <i>by George Cruickshanks</i> ... ..                                                 | ...              | 64   |
| Captain Cuttle, Major Bagstock and Mr. Micawber ... ..                                                             | ...              | 65   |
| The late Mr. W. H. Banks ... ..                                                                                    | ...              | 66   |
| J. K. Thompson ... ..                                                                                              | ...              | 82   |
| Little Dorrit's Church ... ..                                                                                      | ...              | 83   |
| Drawing by Arthur Moreland to advertise "Country Life" Cigarettes ... ..                                           | ...              | 87   |
| Fairmount Waterworks, Philadelphia ... ..                                                                          | ...              | 89   |
| Pensylvania Hospital ... ..                                                                                        | ...              | 90   |
| Eastern Penitentiary, Pennsylvania ... ..                                                                          | ...              | 90   |
| United States Hotel, Philadelphia ... ..                                                                           | ...              | 91   |
| Girard College, Philadelphia ... ..                                                                                | ...              | 92   |
| United States Bank, Philadelphia ... ..                                                                            | ...              | 93   |
| Hotel Continental, Philadelphia ... ..                                                                             | ...              | 93   |
| Rochester Cathedral, Western Doorway ... ..                                                                        | ...              | 96   |
| Minor Canon Corner, Rochester ... ..                                                                               | ...              | 100  |
| White Hart Hotel, Bath ... ..                                                                                      | ...              | 105  |
| Moses Pickwick, <i>at 37</i> ... ..                                                                                | ...              | 107  |
| Extract from the register at Corsham Church, Wilts., showing the registration of the first Pickwick in 1694 ... .. | ...              | 109  |
| Music of "Eveleen's Bower" ... ..                                                                                  | ...              | 113  |
| Music of "The Soldier's Tear" ... ..                                                                               | ...              | 115  |
| Music of "Then farewell! my trim-built wherry" ... ..                                                              | ...              | 116  |
| Nast Hyde, near St. Albans ... ..                                                                                  | ...              | 120  |
| <i>Bleak House</i> Cameo, <i>photo by Walter Dexter</i> ... ..                                                     | ...              | 125  |
| <i>Bleak House</i> Cameo, <i>photo by Walter Dexter</i> ... ..                                                     | ...              | 127  |
| Drawing by S. T. Dadd to advertise Ronuk ... ..                                                                    | ...              | 128  |
| <i>Bleak House</i> Cameo, <i>photo by Walter Dexter</i> ... ..                                                     | ...              | 131  |
| <i>Bleak House</i> Cameo, <i>photo by Walter Dexter</i> ... ..                                                     | ...              | 133  |
| <i>Bleak House</i> Cameo, <i>photo by Walter Dexter</i> ... ..                                                     | ...              | 134  |
| <i>Bleak House</i> Cameo, <i>photo by Walter Dexter</i> ... ..                                                     | ...              | 139  |
| Charles Dickens in his pony chaise... ..                                                                           | ...              | 140  |
| Daniel Grant ... ..                                                                                                | ...              | 142  |
| William Grant ... ..                                                                                               | ...              | 142  |
| Grant's Tower, Ramsbottom ... ..                                                                                   | ...              | 144  |
| St. Andrew's Church, Ramsbottom ... ..                                                                             | ...              | 144  |

|                                                                                                           | PAGE                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Cheeryble House, Cannon Street, Manchester                                                                | 146                     |
| Memorial Tablets to the Brothers Grant in St. Andrew's Church,<br>Ramsbottom, <i>photo by D. J. Parry</i> | 148                     |
| William Miles, F.R.S.L.                                                                                   | 149                     |
| Facsimile of a letter from Leo Tolstoy                                                                    | 166                     |
| Royal Crescent, Bath                                                                                      | 169                     |
| Bust of Dickens, by Percy Fitzgerald, in the Pump Room, Bath                                              | 170                     |
| Park Street, Bath                                                                                         | 176                     |
| <i>Bleak House</i> Cameo                                                                                  | 177                     |
| Tompion Clock in the Pump Room, Bath                                                                      | 181                     |
| Music of "The Ratcatcher's Daughter"                                                                      | 193                     |
| Music of "Jim Crow"                                                                                       | 195                     |
| Facsimile of old song sheet "Buffalo Gals"                                                                | 196                     |
| <i>Bleak House</i> Cameo                                                                                  | 197                     |
| 35 St. James's Square, Bath                                                                               | 202                     |
| 8 Chichester Rents, <i>photo by T. W. Tyrell</i>                                                          | 208                     |
| The Old Shop, Chichester Rents, <i>photo by T. W. Tyrell</i>                                              | 208                     |
| Burial Ground of St. Martins-in-the-Fields, <i>from a print of 1840</i>                                   | 210                     |
| The two Burial Grounds in the Drury Lane District (Map)                                                   | 211                     |
| Roman Bath, Bath                                                                                          | 212                     |
| Charles Dickens (two portraits)                                                                           | 219                     |
| Drawings to advertise Tooth's Sydney Bitter Ale                                                           | 228                     |
| Drawing to advertise Fox's Glacier Mints                                                                  | 229                     |
| Drawing by Arthur Moreland to advertise "Country Life" Tobacco                                            | 230                     |
| Queen Square, Bath                                                                                        | 236                     |
| Mr. Pickwick playing Whist at Bath                                                                        | 254                     |
| J. W. T. Ley                                                                                              | 261                     |
| Some Dickens Tea Parties—Drawings by Fred Pegram to advertise<br>Celindo Tea                              | 276, 278, 281, 283, 285 |
| J. Cuming Walters                                                                                         | 282                     |
| 13 Johnson Street, Camden Town                                                                            | 286                     |
| Montague Tigg                                                                                             | 286                     |
| Pip, David, Toots                                                                                         | 287                     |
| Mr. Pip, Barkis                                                                                           | 288                     |
| Music of "Vilikins and his Dinah"                                                                         | 291                     |
| T. Sturge Cotterell, J.P., M.B.E.                                                                         | 304                     |
| The Pickwick Ride to Bath, 1930                                                                           | 305                     |
| Mr. Winkle's nocturnal experience at Bath                                                                 | 310                     |
| The Eight Official Delegates at Conference of Fellowship North<br>American Branches, Philadelphia         | 314                     |
| The late Mrs. G. W. Panzetta                                                                              | 329                     |

Also headings and strips designed by Ruth Whittaker, small portraits of Dickens, pictures of numerous characters, scenes from the novels, and places in Dickens-land.



# THE THREE SPIRITS

## I.—THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST.

*Though Scrooge pressed down the extinguisher with all his force, he could not hide the light.*

'Tis late, no visitor will come to-night,  
And Oh ! the night is dark and very cold,  
Snow on the roofs and trees, on field and wold,  
While thickest clouds have quenched the stars' faint light :  
Yet there is one who'll surely come, in spite  
Of cold and dark and dangers manifold,  
And give our sad gray thoughts one touch of gold  
Filling the solemn hour with dim delight.

The " Ghost of Christmas Past " to-night appears,  
He bears a light, the " Light of other days,"  
His gifts are memories of the vanished years,  
And joys and hopes no traitor fate betrays,  
Bright are they now, but bright with glistening tears,  
And all the Past grows fairer as we gaze.

## II.—THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

*And every man had a kinder feeling for another on that day.*

Ring out sweet bells across the sparkling earth,  
The woods are silent and the trees are bare,  
Ring happy bells to all the listening air.  
And fill the land with music and with mirth,  
Telling your story of the wond'rous Birth  
Of Hope, this day's great message, everywhere,  
To-day another's burden we will share  
And self-forgetful find life's greater worth.

The crimson holly has a warm bright glow,  
The mistletoe is fair as moonlight's sheen,  
The laurel brings a lamp of evergreen,  
And sunrise paints fair roses on the snow  
Warm hearts bring summer time where e'er they go,  
And Christmas makes warm hearts though frost be keen.

## III.—THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS YET TO COME.

*It shrunk, collapsed and dwindled down into a bedpost.*

O Phantom draped in garments from the loom  
Of Erebus and Night and full of woe,  
Black as a raven, jackdaw, rook, or crow,  
These birds are chosen as being birds of doom.  
We do not love you and prefer your room  
To your most horrid company. Now go.  
You wish to make our flesh creep but we know  
You're just a piece of inspissated gloom.

" The last of the three spirits," a sham ghost,  
The only one who is explained away,  
And after that he's not the face to stay,  
His life and reputation are both lost.  
He does his best to turn from black to gray,  
And shrinks and dwindles down into—a post.

J. H. McNULTY.



"And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God bless us every one!"

Charles Dickens.

From a lithograph by Sol Eytinge, Jr., published in U.S.A.  
on the occasion of Dickens's last visit to America

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## CONTENTS

KATHERINE MANS-  
FIELD AND DICKENS  
By Prof. Ed. Wagenknecht

DICKENS'S EARLIEST  
MANUSCRIPT

"THE EXTRAORDIN-  
ARY GAZETTE"

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ON *BLEAK HOUSE*

THE BATH ROAD

AND OTHER  
ARTICLES

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